

Abstract of the Invention

5

A network provides computer services to users and has a centralized data center (CDC) and regional data centers (RDCs) coupled to the CDC. Each RDC is coupled to a plurality of users and maintains for each associated user back up storage. Each user has a user machine with user data stored thereon, and such user data is automatically mirrored to the associated back up storage on the RDC. Each RDC maintains for each associated user a user profile corresponding to the user, and each user and each RDC has a physical location. A user newly couples to the network by contacting the CDC at a network address thereof and receiving from the CDC a network address of an RDC based at least in part on the location of the user. The RDC of the received network address maintains the user profile for the user, and the location of such RDC is expected to be relatively close to the location of the user as compared with the location of all other RDCs. Once coupled to the network, the user receives from the RDC a list of servers to use for services provided by the network for the user. The list of servers is obtained from the user profile for the user and comprises a list of corresponding network addresses. An application at a first network location may issue a command to a client at a second network location.

25